

Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body's Resources Committee held at school on Wednesday 23 November 2016 at 6.00pm

Members of the Committee:

Martin Campbell
Heather Cook
Karl Grenz (Chair of Committee)
Angela Leach
Angela Mason-Bell
Iain Smith
Clerk: Harriet Owen

Invited attendees (non voting):

Hannah Kidney (Deputy Head)* currently on maternity leave
Suzanne Wernham (Deputy Head)
Gillian Elwood (School Business Manager: SBM)

Present: Heather Cook, Karl Grenz, Angela Leach (Head), Angela Mason-Bell, Iain Smith (GB Chair).

Invited attendees: Suzanne Wernham (Deputy Head), Gillian Elwood (School Business Manager)

In attendance: Harriet Owen (Clerk)

1. Statutory responsibility

• Apologies

Martin Campbell (illness). Mr Grenz proposed, Mrs Mason-Bell seconded that the apologies should be accepted. Agreed by all.

• Declaration of interest

None declared.

• Approve minutes of the last meeting (19 October 2016)

Mr Grenz proposed, Mr Smith seconded the minutes of 19 October 2016 should be accepted. Agreed by all.

• Actions arising

The Head reported that twenty Year 6 pupils had attended an 'Inspiring Futures Day' at NCA before half term, as noted at the previous meeting. It had been a great success.

2. Finance Monitoring (SBM)

Mrs Elwood noted copies of the BCR for month end October 2016 were distributed prior to the meeting, together with other financial reports. The carry forward is based on all budgets being fully spent. Budget holders have been asked to submit all orders by the end of January at the latest. Areas of staff costs remain as predicted. The adjustments to teacher salaries, following the appraisal process, have been budgeted in. A miscoding of MSA costs will be corrected. Water bills show an under spend: however, Mrs Elwood says she remains cautious about this area. Mrs Elwood reported the forecast variance is continuing to be monitored closely and she will send Governors a copy of the third quarter report in December, following a visit from Ray Byford, so Governors are kept fully informed about budget variances. A Governor asked if an area showed an under spend, Mr Byford could provide an explanation. Mrs Elwood said she had expected a company to carry out the rolling programme of replacing taps in the week beginning 5 December. However, due to availability with this company, it may not be possible for them to visit until the end of January. Mrs Elwood said she would like to use this company as they have carried out previous work in the school. The Head asked Mrs Elwood to seek advice from the school's Property Manager, and email an update to Governors by the end of this week, as this is an urgent concern.

Mrs Elwood will meet with Mrs Wernham to assess what funding has come in for SEND and what may be expected to come in as additional income (if any), and funding lost through pupils moving schools etc. A Governor asked for clarification about this budget area i.e. is it in line with profiled costs until year end, as this budget area has been revised from the originally set figure of £80,964, to £74,690, and to date the actual spend has been £46,506. Mrs Elwood will include this in her next report.

A Governor asked for explanatory notes to be included with the BCR reports that came to Governors, so that if there were an over spend or a miscoding that is to be corrected, then it would be easily visible. A Governor said he would welcome an explanatory note about catering costs and how the reconciliation between revenue and expenditure on meals is achieved. Mrs Elwood will action this request in her next report.

In answer to a Governor's question, Mrs Elwood reported that the carry forward is £34,465 of unallocated funds (unmapped codes). This includes £9,000 in the school fund account; however, £2,500 has recently been spent from the school fund on new stage costs. The Head noted Team Shirley kindly donated the other £2,500 costs of the staging.

A Governor noted that when looking at the original budget opening balances (from the October BCR), the original opening balance was £85,305. The total income in the original budget is £2,104,747: the total expenditure in the original budget is £2,137,452. Given expenditure is set to exceed income by £33,000, from these given figures, should the carry forward forecast be £53,000 (i.e. £85,305 minus excess expenditure of £33,000).

Mrs Elwood said the original budget had shown a carry forward of £52,600 and this had now been revised to a current forecast variance of £34,465. Mrs Elwood said the total of unmapped codes of £34,465 is the unspent funding that is predicted to become

the carryforward. A Governor asked for clarification about the carry forward, as the total closing balance forecast variance is £16,965. The school had started this financial year with a carry forward of £52,000; this has now been revised and the carry forward, from unmapped codes, is now expected to be £34,465. However, the stated closing balance in the forecast variance is £16,965. A Governor asked for clarification about whether the forecast variance is the same as the budget variance. **Mrs Elwood said she would seek the clarifications requested and compile a summary report for Governors.** The GB Chair said it is essential for Governors to know an accurate carry forward figure and how it is formulated.

Governors discussed the most effective ways for financial reporting to be given for their meetings and agreed that whilst the BCR supports discussion, notes to explain budgetary areas and variances are needed (e.g. E18 other occupation costs); five or six key lines are to be included to highlight the highest/lowest variances; figures are to be presented as whole figures, decimal places are to be dropped; utilities bills are to be noted as paid/unpaid/awaiting a bill; a general feedback on movement in the budget; an outturn column on the forecast variance. **Mrs Elwood said she would ask Mr Byford for advice about how to produce the required report, as FMS6 generated reports do not give the breakdown of details Governors have requested.**

Mrs Elwood said she hoped to bring a comparison of costs and a response from the LA to the next meeting about replacing the outside planters. Mrs Elwood said she has made enquiries about replacing the rotting wood in the planters, with recycled plastic planters. The final comparative cost will be brick built structures. Mrs Elwood has talked to a joiner and sourced plastic wood companies. A Governor expressed the need for this work to be undertaken as quickly, noting whilst they have been cordoned off, the planters are in the middle of play areas. **Mrs Elwood said she has spoken to an LA officer and will now email him requesting follow up action.** The Head said the LA need to take responsibility as the planters are in a very poor state and need urgent attention and asked Mrs Elwood to obtain a response from the LA; then the school can decide the best way forward and get an indication of timescales. **The Committee Chair asked Mrs Elwood to communicate to the LA that Governors are very concerned that the planters are not fit for purpose and want a formal response from the LA.**

Mrs Elwood reported that Mrs Bingham returned to work after half term. Orders from budget holders have been requested by 31 December; orders will then be placed in January and up to half term, to ensure payment is made in the correct financial year. This will give a clearer year-end forecast. A new projector has been purchased for the Shirley Centre (old) hall. A projector is often used by groups hiring the hall. The purchase cost will be partly met by income from lettings. Mr Frett, in Mrs Kidney's absence, has now taken charge of making agreed purchases under the ICT rolling programme.

A regular, weekly booking has been agreed with the Cambridge Orchestra who would like to hire the Centre Hall. They will pay additional costs for a storage area they have requested. In answer to a Governor's question, Mrs Elwood said the Orchestra will take out insurance through the County, or arrange it themselves. Another regular weekly booking, the Zumba class, continues. Enquiries have been received from a Bridge Club and martial arts group for regular weekly lettings; Mrs Elwood will follow these enquiries up in January, as these groups do not start until Spring 2017. An increase in enquiries for children's parties on Saturday afternoons has been noted. **The Head noted the need for Mrs Elwood to source another keyholder as a priority.**

The meeting discussed the annual comparator report. The GB Chair said the purpose of the exercise is to check expenditure across all areas to ensure there are no areas of obvious difference.

Mrs Elwood said the comparative report used financial data, as a comparison per pupil, from a school in the County, with the closest numbers of pupils to Shirley in terms of SEND and Pupil Premium. Exception reporting highlighted: Shirley spends less on teaching staff and teaching assistants per pupil; Shirley spends less on MSAs and afterschool club staff; variances in cleaning and site staff suggest the comparator school outsource their cleaning and do not have cleaning staff on their roll; in terms of all admin staff groups, Shirley is higher.

There is a discrepancy for other occupation costs (£149 per pupils at Shirley compared to £10 at the comparator school); however, Shirley includes the exceptional premises costs of £55,000 that is reimbursed through the school's funding. Without this unique premises cost, the occupation cost of a Shirley pupil would be £13. Shirley spends 6% more on energy, water and building maintenance.

Shirley generates more income from facilities and services, including lettings. The comparator school receives more donations, contributions to trip costs and more in additional grants than Shirley. Whilst the comparator school spends more per capita, Shirley spends £7 per capita more than the group average. Whilst Shirley spends less per capita on catering costs, this is driven by the costs the school's supplier charges for meals. Other providers can choose their own rates and may charge differently.

The meeting noted there may be unknown reasons for these variances e.g. the comparator school may use a large ratio of supply staff; whilst Shirley is close to the average for resources per capita, the comparator school may have decided to spend a lump sum on one project which would have resulted in a higher per capita spend. Brought-in professional services can also skew costs e.g. one school may have more SLAs. In answer to a Governor's question about rates, Mrs Elwood confirmed the LA pays the rates of all maintained schools.

In conclusion, the Chair said it would be helpful to carry out the comparator exercise with the same school next year and to look at per capita spending more closely, to ensure Shirley is not overspending, or conversely under spending, in any areas. In answer to a question from the GB Chair, Mrs Elwood said she and Mrs Bingham had been unable to find a suitable comparator school in Cambridge.

Mrs Elwood said there were no arising actions to report from the SFVS 2015-16.

The Chair thanked Mrs Elwood for her report.

3. Premises

The meeting agreed relevant items had been taken earlier in the meeting.

4. Staffing (Head's Report)

The Head noted there are five staff currently on maternity and detailed how these leaves are to be covered. A new cleaner has joined the cleaning team. One of the cleaning team is currently on sick leave; these hours are being covered by the existing cleaning team. The appraisal process of the school's thirty-two teaching assistants is currently underway.

There has been a small increase in staff absence in the summer term 2016 with a total of 65 days lost to sickness and 67.5 days lost for other reasons. The total for the summer term 2016 was 132.5 days. In summer term 2015, 77 days were lost to sickness and 51 days were lost for other reasons. This was a total of 128 days. *(Both sets of figures do not include absences of over 10 days, maternity leave or annual leave). The SLT will monitor the rates of absence and, if necessary, will give another presentation about the importance of not taking time off unless it is absolutely necessary, as staff absence impacts on learning.

Mrs Wernham has now completed PREVENT training and is the second designated person within the school. Mrs Wernham also attended CP Designated Person training on 3 and 4 November. Mrs Sanders attended CP DP refresher training before her maternity leave started, so that her training does not elapse during her maternity leave. Mrs Taylor's CP DP refresher training is in February 2017. Mrs Marsters is also PREVENT and CP DP trained. Whole-school CP training has been booked for April 2017: this ensures that guidelines are adhered to that state every member of staff must have their CP training updated at least every 3 years. The Safeguarding training board has been updated to reflect the staff and governors who have named responsibilities in this area.

The school has invited a LA Officer to carry out a Safeguarding Audit on 2 December. This is a free service and the auditor will use the Safeguarding audit tool to complete his audit.

Reverend Adams visited the school on 4 October to undertake Safeguarding monitoring tasks. During this visit Reverend Adams monitored 1) how effective is the school's safeguarding training for its newly appointed teachers and 2) is the school fully compliant with the mandatory requirements of the school central record (SCR). To complete this monitoring exercise, Reverend Adams met and interviewed the school's five NQTs, and met with Mrs Elwood and the Head to monitor the SCR. In answer to a question from the GB Chair, the Head said Mrs Elwood has responsibility for maintaining the SCR. The Head checks with Mrs Elwood that all new staff are on the SCR and that the folder of letters of assurances from outside agencies cover all visitors to the school. The Head said Mrs Elwood checks the identity of visitors to the school and, if appropriate, records this information on the SCR. A Safeguarding Governor noted that mandatory training e.g. CP training undertaken by staff, needs to be recorded on the SCR too. The Head asked Mrs Elwood to action this point. CP refresher training has been booked for whole school staff in April 2017: this in line with guidelines that every member of staff must have their CP training updated at least every three years.

The second visit Reverend Adams made was on 1 November to meet with a member from each staff group to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities for Child Protection. Reverend Adams also met with two groups of children (Pupil Voice). Reports are expected from Reverend Adams in due course.

In keeping with the monitoring programme, Mr Grenz carried out a monitoring visit on 16 November focusing on safer recruitment and Mrs Mason-Bell will visit on 23 November to carry out the annual Child Protection record keeping audit.

The Head said she was grateful to the attentiveness given by the school's three Safeguarding Governors, Reverend Adams, Mrs Mason-Bell and Mr Grenz, to this key area.

The meeting discussed the figures from the October 2016 census. In answer to a Governor's question about the decrease in the number of children with SEND, Mrs Wernham said pupils in Reception and Nursery are not on the SEND Register yet. These will be added shortly, so the numbers will increase. The meeting noted the demographic of the area, which reflected the numbers of pupils with EAL, number of languages spoken etc. In answer to a question from a Governor, the Head said this placed a strain on the school's resources e.g. in regard to supporting EAL pupils. The school has an EAL TA. This is a 50% role; the Head said she would like this to be a 100% role to provide much needed support. The Chair asked the Head to bring any future requests for increased support to this Committee.

The Chair thanked the Head for her report.

5. Pupil Premium Report: Review of 2015-16 and the Pupil Premium Plan for 2016-17

The Head said Mrs Kidney had completed this report.

The meeting noted PP funding for 15-16 was £212,560; however, the 16-17 allocation is £194,640. The Head said the fall in funding reflects the fact that fewer pupils are eligible for PP funding.

In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said Pupil Premium pupils are those that have met eligibility for free school meals within the last six years. Lower age school children do not have the same levels of eligibility as pupils in previous years, and the consequent decrease in PP funding will become evident as these children move up through the school. The Head said the thresholds for eligibility have changed and the criteria is now much higher to meet for many parents.

Mrs Kidney had asked teaching staff to provide her with information about the progress of pupils, pupil attainment, in-house benchmarking and Target Tracker assessments, to enable her to illustrate the impact of interventions.

Governors discussed aspects of the PP Plans and agreed that allocations of PP funding are clearly shown to be used as effectively as possible to improve the learning experience for pupils. A Governor asked why music had not been taken into the PP Plan for 2016-17. The Head said that £1,000 had been allocated in the 15-16 Plan for PP pupils to have musical tuition that they would otherwise not be able to access. However, parents did not apply for this funding. The meeting discussed this, noting it is 'softer' area in which to measure impact. The Head noted other areas that have a 'softer' impact e.g. Blue Smile and the KS2 Sports Coach, who is also proving a great benefit. TAs continue to deliver interventions out of the class. In answer to a Governor's question, the Head said Sound Training, which was introduced last year, is a reading intervention programme that boosts pupils' reading ability and helps pupils gain an understanding of text and unfamiliar vocabulary. This intervention will continue in 2016-17 and works with 20 children from Years 5 and 6.

The GB Chair said he was pleased to see a RAG rating had been included to show the effectiveness of the interventions in 2015-16. Governors agreed this was helpful as they could clearly see the effectiveness of various interventions. A Governor asked if Ofsted would agree with the school's assessments within the PP Plans. The Head said she was confident that a good balance of input to further attainment and nurture for pupils could be evidenced from EYFS through to Year 6. Both Committees have had the opportunity to review the 2015-16 PP Plan and discuss the Plan for 2016-17. The PP Plan will go to the GB in December for approval.

6. Health and Safety

Mrs Cook, Governor with responsibility for Health and Safety, gave a verbal update to the meeting.

There have been two unexpected fire evacuations, in addition to the termly planned evacuation, this term. Both were as a result of the alarm accidentally being set off. All evacuations had proceeded smoothly. One accident to a pupil had resulted in the child being taken to A&E with a fractured wrist. Teaching Assistants have received refresher training for asthma, allergies and epipens. One further TA has this term received full first aider training (Mrs Lomas). Mrs Cook is the school's Senior First Aider. Mrs Lomas joins Mrs Chambers and Mrs Hazle as named first aiders.

Mrs Cook said there has been a high levels of sickness and she wants to lead a big push on handwashing as a preventative measure. This will be possible when new taps are installed. Mrs Cook is due to meet with Mrs Elwood shortly to discuss actions taken arising from her latest health and safety inspection of the school and site.

Mrs Cook discussed the annual flu vaccine programme that has been offered to Years 1, 2 and 3 this autumn. The Head said despite extensive efforts by Mrs Cook that had included a letter from her, to parents in these year groups to encourage their child's participation in this programme, the take up had again been disappointingly low, compared to other schools. The school's Traveller Liaison officer had visited the site to talk to parents directly. The form used by the nursing service is very complicated and Mrs Cook had made every effort to meet with parents to discuss any concerns they might have. The Head said she wished to place the formal thanks of the school to Mrs Cook in the minutes.

Mrs Cook is currently updating the health and medical policies used by the school, following updates from the LA and DfE. The Chair thanked Mrs Cook for her report and her extensive work and diligence with this important area.

7. Strategy

No items were put forward.

8. Safeguarding

The meeting agreed that relevant items had been discussed earlier in the meeting that had arisen from the Head's Report. Written reports, from monitoring visits made by Safeguarding Governors, will come to Governors in due course. Mrs Mason-Bell had visited this afternoon to carry out the annual CP record keeping audit, with the Headteacher. Mrs Mason-Bell noted it had been a successful visit with a couple of minor points to note for future actions.

9. Statutory responsibilities

Invacuation Procedure

The Head explained the background for this Procedure being presented. 'Lockdown' procedures should be seen as a sensible and proportionate response to any external or internal incident, which has the potential to pose a threat to the safety of children and adults in the school. Lockdown procedures should aim to limit disruption to the learning environment whilst ensuring the safety of the children, staff and other users of the building. Typical situations that may cause a lockdown procedure to be activated are: a reported incident or disturbance in the local area with the potential to a risk to children and adults in the school; an intruder on the school site or within the school building; a warning being received regarding a local risk of air pollution; the close proximity of a dangerous animal roaming loose. Staff will always have advance notice of a lockdown drill; therefore, if the signal occurs without warning, staff must assume it is not a drill. The Head then described the signal and actions that would be undertaken in the event of a lockdown procedure.

Governors discussed points within this Procedure. The Head said the school has followed a model procedure and it is part of the school's safeguarding procedures to ensure the children's safety in the event of an incident that requires all to stay inside the building, rather than leave the building as in the event of a fire alarm. The Head is meeting with stakeholders to explain the procedures and reiterated there would always be advance notification of this annual drill.

In answer to a question from the Chair, the Head discussed how the school would communicate internally and with emergency services. In the event of an actual lockdown, the school would use its social media feeds to inform parents of a lockdown taking place, as the phone and entrances would not be manned, and external doors locked and nobody allowed in or out. The introduction of an invacuation procedure has already been highlighted to parents in the school's newsletter.

Governors agreed it is a Procedure that needs to be in place and practised to ensure it goes smoothly. Governors asked that the SLT review the Policy after the first practice. The Policy will then be reviewed by Governors in summer 2017.

Mr Smith proposed, Mr Grenz seconded that the Invacuation (or Lockdown) Procedure be adopted. Agreed by all.

Lettings Policy

Mrs Elwood is working on updating the Lettings Policy and associated documents and will bring this to a future meeting.

Pay Policy

The Head said the Policy needs revising e.g. updated salary scales need inserting. Mrs Elwood will update this for the Spring A meeting.

10. Conclusion items

The Chair noted he is considering sections of the EPM handbook that was distributed at the first Committee meeting this year. The Chair noted it is essentially a working document with requirements built on many levels. The Chair said he would build a file that will include an internal checklist that may be used by Governors for evaluation purposes.

Date of the next meeting: Wednesday 25 January 2017 at 6.00pm.

The meeting ended at 7.45pm.